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## DEPARTMENTAL CONFERENCES.

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### THE ANCIENT CLASSICS.

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#### SOME NOTES ON CLASSICAL TRAINING IN A GERMAN GYMNASIUM.

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The German *Gymnasium* is a nine-year school, in which a boy is received at the age of nine or ten, and given a continuous training until his eighteenth or nineteenth year. It corresponds, roughly speaking, to the last three grades of our grammar schools, the four years of our high school, and the freshman and sophomore years of our college. It receives boys either from the elementary classes of the *Töchter Schule* (the popular form of school for girls, to the lower classes of which boys also are admitted), or from the *Volksschule* (the elementary common or public school), or from the *Vorbereitungsschule* (a preparatory school affording especial training in preparation for the *Gymnasium*); and it graduates its students into the university or some higher technical school. It will thus be seen that the *Gymnasium* is the very heart and life of the whole German educational system; and while in recent years it has been modified to meet the pressure of more modern thought and needs to the extent of the establishment of the *Realgymnasium*, the so-called *Reform-Gymnasium*, and even in a few cases the *Mädchengymnasium*, it still remains the great training school for boys, and maintains its time-honored methods and curriculum almost intact.

The nine classes of the *Gymnasium*, beginning at the lowest grade, are styled *Sexta*, *Quinta*, *Quarta*, *Unter*, and *Ober Tertia*, *Unter* and *Ober Secunda*, and *Unter* and *Ober Prima*, respectively. The course of study includes religion, that is, Bible and church history, with the catechism of the established church, German (rhetoric and composition, and literature), Latin, Greek, French,

history, geography, mathematics, natural science, writing, drawing, with English and Hebrew as electives in the last two years. To this are added singing during the first two years, and physical culture throughout the course.

Following is the plan of studies, showing the proportions of time allotted to these various studies:

|                      | VI | V  | IV | U-III | O-III | U-II | O-II | U-I | O-I | TOTAL |
|----------------------|----|----|----|-------|-------|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
| Religion.....        | 3  | 2  | 2  | 2     | 2     | 2    | 2    | 2   | 2   | 19    |
| German.....          | 4  | 3  | 3  | 2     | 2     | 3    | 3    | 3   | 3   | 26    |
| Latin.....           | 8  | 8  | 8  | 8     | 8     | 7    | 7    | 7   | 7   | 68    |
| Greek.....           | .. | .. | .. | 6     | 6     | 6    | 6    | 6   | 6   | 36    |
| French.....          | .. | .. | 4  | 2     | 2     | 3    | 3    | 3   | 3   | 20    |
| History.....         | .. | .. | 2  | 2     | 2     | 2    | 3    | 3   | 3   | 17    |
| Geography.....       | 2  | 2  | 2  | 1     | 1     | 1    | ..   | ..  | ..  | 9     |
| Mathematics.....     | 4  | 4  | 4  | 3     | 3     | 4    | 4    | 4   | 4   | 34    |
| Natural science..... | 2  | 2  | 2  | 2     | 2     | 2    | 2    | 2   | 2   | 18    |
| Writing.....         | 2  | 2  | .. | ..    | ..    | ..   | ..   | ..  | ..  | 4     |
| Drawing.....         | .. | 2  | 2  | 2     | 2     | ..   | ..   | ..  | ..  | 8     |
| Total.....           | 25 | 25 | 29 | 30    | 30    | 30   | 30   | 30  | 30  | 259   |

It will be seen by a glance at this curriculum that Latin is its most important element, if we are to judge by the amount of time allotted to that subject in comparison with the others. And such is the case. Latin is made the ground on which the hardest battles of a boy's education are fought out. Here he receives his severest mental drill and training. Incidentally, it may be remarked that Latin is considered in Germany distinctly a man's language. Except in the most up-to-date private schools, it is not taught to girls and women, who are supposed either to have no practical use for this study, or not to be equal to the mastering of its difficulties.

The Latin curriculum for the entire course is most carefully and in the minutest detail planned out by the governmental directors of education, and followed by the individual schools and instructors. This is true also, of course, in the case of all other studies in the *Gymnasium*.

Following is the detailed curriculum for the Latin course, arranged by years:

*Sexta*.—A study of the regular forms, with the exception of

deponent verbs. In connection with the reading and exercise book, a vocabulary of carefully selected words is gained in preparation for the later reading. The reading and exercise books therefore use the words employed by the prose writers who are read in the middle grades, and take their subjects mainly from the old tales in history; and a connection is thus early established with the writers to be read later, so far as language and subject-matter go. The text-books offer connected reading as well as isolated sentences, at first for translation from Latin into German, and then from German into Latin, essentially the same vocabulary being used in each.

This work is done in the class-room, under the direction and with the help of the teacher, and the pupils are then asked to repeat the work alone. As the work progresses, the independent work of the pupil is called for more and more. Constant practice in construing is given. The pupils are not overburdened at the start, or ever, with large amounts of technical syntax. At the beginning, the elementary rules of syntax are introduced and explained by examples as occasion requires; *e. g.*, expressions of place and time, the ablative of instrument, the most commonly used prepositions and conjunctions, and some simple rules about the Latin order of words. These are all developed out of the simple reading matter, and are practiced orally and in writing.

There is a weekly written class exercise of about half an hour's work in connection with the reading. This is handed in to the teacher for correction, and returned to the student for recopying if necessary.

*Quinta.*—The work of this year is a repetition of the regular forms mastered in the previous year, with the addition of deponent verbs, such of the irregular forms as are absolutely necessary, and the enlargement of vocabulary along the lines mentioned above.

A new reading and exercise book is introduced similar to that used in *Sexta*, but of a properly advanced grade. The same elementary grammar, however, is continued through both years.

At this stage considerably more connected reading is offered to the students than in the previous year. Constant practice in

construing is continued. Further advance in syntax is made, the rules being developed and illustrated from the exercises, which are constructed with especial reference to these. New points of syntax introduced here are the use of the accusative with the infinitive, the participial constructions, the ablative absolute, etc.; also the special constructions with names of towns, the double accusative, and the historical perfect.

The weekly written exercise of *Sexta* is continued in *Quinta*, to be prepared either in class-room or at home.

In these first two years of his work the boy has three text-books: an elementary grammar for the two years combined, and an exercise book for each year. These books contain just what is to be learned in the first two years, and nothing else; hence both teacher and pupil have a perfect understanding of the amount of work to be done.

The elementary grammar which I found in use in *Sexta* and *Quinta* in the *Gymnasium* which I visited is a small book of seventy pages in all, edited by Seyffert and Fries (1902). It contains the simpler facts about the five declensions of nouns, with paradigms of all the regular forms, rules for gender, etc. By way of helping the memory, rules for gender and other generalizations are put into verse form. For example, we find the following rule and exceptions for the masculine gender in the third declension:

#### 1. HAUPTREGEL FÜR DIE MASCULINA.

Brauch' männlich *ō*, or, *ōs*, *e-r*  
Und *e-s* Ungleichsilbiger.

One of the *Ausnahmen* or exceptions is:

Von Ungleichsilbigen auf *e-s*  
Ist eins ein Neutrum, nämlich *aes* ;  
Als weiblich aber merke man  
Sich *merces*, *seges*, *quies* an.

Next come adjectives with their declensions and comparisons, the different classes of numerals, and the various pronouns—all this in twenty-eight pages of large type. In the matter of declension it should be observed that the German student of

Latin has a great advantage over the English student, inasmuch as the former has a much more highly inflected language of his own than has the latter. For example, when the German boy learns his declension of *puer*, he has a varying form of his own language, especially in his article, if not in his noun, to fit the corresponding case variations of the Latin, and has to call in the help of a preposition only in the ablative case, thus:

N. *puer*, *der Knabe*, the boy (subject).

G. *pueri*, *des Knaben*, of the boy.

D. *puero*, *dem Knaben*, to the boy.

A. *puerum*, *den Knaben*, the boy (object).

V. *puer*, *O Knabe*, O boy.

Abl. *a puero*, *von dem Knaben*, from or by the boy.

The obvious value of this fact is that in the very act of learning the paradigms the boy learns, not only the form, but the syntax of each word, so that ordinary uses of all the cases become a grammatical commonplace from the very beginning.

In pp. 28–70, inclusive, we have the treatment of the verb; the verb paradigms in twenty-three pages, followed by a most excellent analysis by conjugations of the most important verbs according to their stem forms and principal compounds. Then four pages are devoted to the irregular verbs, *i. g.*, *possum*, *fero*, *volo*, etc., and one page to the prepositions. Formal syntax is confined to the last two pages and a half, and treats only of the methods of expressing place where, whence, and whither, with names of towns, etc.; the accusative with the infinitive, the participial, and the ablative absolute constructions. Other common noun constructions are learned, as above stated, in connection with the declensions. The syntax of the verb is reserved for later study. The exercises for translations from Latin into German and from German into Latin in the exercise book for *Sexta* are most carefully graded, consisting at first of short unconnected sentences, which call into use the forms as they are met in the study of the grammar in their order, together with such simple constructions as subject and predicate nominative, possessive genitive, indirect and direct object. These paragraphs of isolated sentences are occasionally varied by paragraphs of con-

nected narrative containing only the forms already learned. A good illustration is the following paragraph upon the subject of "Deutschland" which we find as the fourteenth exercise in the beginner's work :

Germania est patria nostra. Silvae et fluvii patriam nostram ornant. Rhenus et Danuvius sunt fluvii magni et lati Germaniae. In ripis Rheni et Danuvii magna copia clarorum oppidorum est. Populi Germaniae semper bellicosi fuerunt. Scuta Germanorum antiquorum erant magna, hastae erant longae. Memoria bellorum et victoriarum semper est in animis nostris. Magna est gloria belli, magna gloria doctrinae; nam multi docti viri et egregii poetae in patria nostra fuerunt. Germani patriam praeclaram habent; pueris bonis et piis patria cara est.

Other similar paragraphs upon the subjects, "Griecher und Römer," "Das Leben der Landleute," "Die persischen Kriege;" later come short fables, simplified to fit the grade, and arranged to illustrate the forms which have already been studied. When the student has finished this first year's exercise book he has mastered a vocabulary of about 700 words, has had repeated exercises in the use of substantives and adjectives of all declensions, the forms and simple uses of verbs of all conjugations, the pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions—no mean acquisition, if it is firmly fixed in the student's mind and ready to his hand.

Instead of going on now to read an author in the second year, the student is still kept upon the elementary grammar, and given a second exercise book in which advance is made to deponent verbs, additional irregular forms, and a greater variety constructions.

The student is not left to puzzle out the new principles by himself, but every advance is made in the class-room itself under the teacher's instruction and guidance. This second-year exercise book is provided with a full Latin-German and German-Latin vocabulary, together with a collection of common idiomatic phrases grouped by subjects—phrases which have already been met, and hence given special attention in the exercises. Thus we find forty phrases under *war*, sixteen under *civic life*, twelve under *private life*, besides numerous proverbs and maxims. The students' vocabulary gained in the first year is thus vastly enlarged by the end of the second.

*Quarta.*—With this definite and ample equipment the student enters *Quarta*. This is a notable time, for he is now given the large grammar which is to serve him for the remainder of his course in the *Gymnasium*; and he is introduced for the first time to a Latin author, namely Cornelius Nepos. The preparation still takes place in the class so far as is necessary, while the self-activity of the pupils is more and more called upon, and occasional exercises in unprepared reading are had. The inevitable exercise book accompanies this year also, but it now contains no Latin readings, but only exercises in the translation of German into Latin. These are based upon the readings in Nepos, and are arranged to give drill in syntax, in which the student now makes a more definite advance and more intensive study, especially of the case uses. If one looks through the exercise book of this year, he cannot but admire the systematic advance into this more difficult ground. The exercises are designed to illustrate in full detail the uses of the oblique cases almost entirely, although one chapter is given to *ut* and *ne* clauses. It is quite apparent that the main stress of this year is still upon Latin composition, since only twelve brief "Lives" of Nepos are read, filling less than one hundred small pages of text; while, on the other hand, seventy-seven large pages of German text are to be translated into Latin, exercises based upon the Latin of Nepos. While this is undoubtedly a hard and perhaps tedious course, one cannot help realizing what a splendid drill it is, and how well versed that student must be in forms and syntax who has faithfully written his way through such a book, under the rigid instruction and correction of an energetic teacher.

*Unter Tertia.*—It is not until the student has reached *Unter Tertia*, or the fourth year of his study of Latin, that he takes up Cæsar's *Gallic War*. He is still given class instruction in preparing the lesson, together with practice in construing. He translates prepared passages, with occasional practice in sight reading, and with drill in phrases and synonyms. Sometimes in the second half of this year Ovid is read. The syntax consists of a repetition of the study of the cases and the completion of the main rules about tenses and modes. Copious exercise in Latin



composition is had through the use of an exercise book based for the most part upon Cæsar for subject-matter and vocabulary, and giving exercises in the case uses and modes just mentioned. This exercise book for *Unter Tertia* contains an excellent *Anhang* or appendix, in which are found numerous Latin phrases grouped by subjects which the students are to commit to memory. Some of these subjects are *Res Militaris* (analyzed into numerous subdivisions), covering 104 phrases; *Vita Publica*, 70 phrases; *Vita Privata*, 33 phrases; etc.

*Ober Tertia.*—The reading of Cæsar's *Gallic War* is continued in this year, with the introduction of selections from the *Civil War* and from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The student now gets his first formal introduction to the reading of poetry as such. Explanation and drill in the use of the dactylic hexameter are given, together with the general study of the more important rules of prosody. Also selections from Ovid are committed to memory. The grammar study repeats the previous work, and completes the survey of the tenses and moods of the verb. The composition book this year is based upon the later books of the *Gallic War*, and drills in the principles of syntax just mentioned, as well as upon the principles of Latin style in prose composition. A digest of these principles is given in an appendix to this volume, which contains also an analyzed list of phrases similar to that found in the book for *Unter Tertia*.

*Unter Secunda.*—The reading of this year comprises the easier orations of Cicero, such as the orations against Catiline, *Pro Roscio*, and *De Imperio Pompei*; selections from Livy, especially the first and second books; Ovid, or Vergil's *Æneid*; occasional sight translations from Cæsar. In connection with this reading, passages are committed to memory from Ovid and Vergil, important phrases are learned, and rules for style, synonyms, etc., are developed out of the reading matter. Grammatical drill, reviewing the previous work, and learning the new principles developed by the more advanced and varied reading, is kept constantly to the front, both in connection with the readings and with the composition book, whose exercises are based upon these readings, especially Livy and Cicero.

*Ober Secunda.*—The readings for this year are selections from Livy's third decade, especially Books XXI and XXII; Cicero's orations *Pro Archia*, *Pro Ligario*, *Pro Rege Deiotaro*, *In Caecilium*, and his *Cato Maior*; selections from Sallust; selections from Vergil's *Æneid* such as form complete pictures in themselves. Connected with these readings is a gathering up and completion of phrases and synonyms previously learned, and a grammatical study of the more difficult principles of syntax and the peculiarities of style. It is these peculiarities of Latin style which the composition book for this year is especially designed to present and illustrate. I cannot too highly praise this book, both for its content and its method. It contains on pp. 85–109 what is called a "grammatico-stylistic appendix," in which are treated systematically the grammatical and stylistic peculiarities of the Latin language as differentiated from the German. The subject-matter is arranged in fifty sections and treated under the following heads: the substantive, the adjective, the pronoun, the verb, the adverb, and the negative. The rules are succinctly stated and adequately illustrated. To quote a single instance, we may take § 4 under the substantive:

Latin verbal nouns in *-tor* are used only (*a*) when the noun is used to represent a person's activity as regular, professional. Thus: *Orator*, an orator by profession; *accusator*, *delator*, one who makes a regular business of bringing accusation. (*b*) Where a single act bestows upon a person lasting significance: *e. g.*, *Romulus*, *Romae conditor*; *Arminius*, *liberator Germaniae*. In all other cases a verbal periphrase should be chosen; *e. g.*, the enemy were the assailants, *hostes nos adorti sunt*; we shall be the victors, *nos vincentus*.

The first part of the volume consists of exercises designed to illustrate these stylistic rules, section by section, first in isolated sentences and then in connected paragraphs, illustrating the principles of the sections under discussion.

*Unter and Ober Prima.*—In these last two years of the course they read such orations of Cicero as *In Verrem*, IV or V, *Pro Plancio*, *Pro Sestio*, and *Pro Murena*; selections from Cicero's philosophical and rhetorical writings and from his letters; Tacitus' *Germania* and *Agricola*, or a part of the *Dialogus*; selections from the *Annals* (especially those parts which treat of Germany),

and from the *Histories*; also selections from Horace, some of whose most famous odes are committed to memory. There is occasional sight-reading, and the pupils are encouraged to private reading, especially of those authors whose works they have already read.

The exercise book used in *Ober Secunda* is continued in this grade also.

With such a training the German student enters the university, with a not very wide knowledge of the authors, to be sure, considering the length of the Latin course already passed, but with a facile knowledge of the language itself which enables him to proceed with ease along any of the higher lines of classical study which now open to him.

*Special elements of note in the Gymnasia.*—As I have studied the German *Gymnasia* from their published curricula and text-books, from conversations with their students and teachers, and especially from a careful observation of one of the most famous of the *Gymnasia, Latina*, one of the institutions of the *Franckeschen Stiftungen* at Halle a/S., I have tried to formulate the points of especial note which seem to me to have contributed to the success of the schools. Some of these points are as follows:

1. The *Gymnasium* is under state control, and must conform to an established high standard of excellence. This control is not in name or form only, but in fact. It extends to all schools, private as well as public. No irresponsible private school can exist in Germany. Every such school must have state sanction and must conform to state standards. I was amazed to find how completely under control, down to details of courses and text-books, were even the private schools. Of course, this state of things is not an unmixed blessing, but the advantages which it confers are obvious.

2. The *Gymnasium* offers nine years of continuous study under one system. Here again, while a certain amount of variety is lost, there is distinctly obviated the inevitable loss of momentum which comes from a too frequent change from school to school, system to system, atmosphere to atmosphere.

3. A high standard for the teaching force is maintained. The

teachers in the *Gymnasium* are all men who have passed through a high and rigid training in preparation for this work, and have afterward served an apprenticeship or probation period as well. They have chosen this particular grade of work as their life-work, and are not merely sojourning here until they can get university positions or go on to some other profession. The *Gymnasium* teacher has a well-recognized social position, and receives a fairly good emolument, as salaries go in Germany. He is also assured of a pension after a certain period of honorable service. Hence we find men of solid character, excellent education, literary ambition, filling these chairs as the sober and final business of their lives. Among all the elements which make for the success of the German *Gymnasia*, this of the highly trained and permanent teaching body must be acknowledged the most potent.

4. *The teachers teach.*—I have noted repeatedly in the outline of the course above that an important part of the daily class work is the instruction by the teacher in the preparation of the lesson. Seldom have I seen a finer piece of teaching than in one of the sections of *Sexta* in the school to which I have just referred. It was a class of forty boys of about ten years of age, as eager and intent upon the lesson as ever they were upon a game of ball. The teacher was very strict and exacting, but kindly as well, and the pleasantest relations seemed to exist between him and his class. It was not a case of one boy reciting, and the rest either studying ahead in preparation for their turn, or attending to private interests among themselves. All were in the lesson all the time. No statement but an exact statement, no expression but a correct expression, in form as well as content, was accepted. There was no giggling or self-consciousness, no laughing at errors. All were in serious and happy earnest. It was as far removed as possible from the hearing of a recitation. The teacher was teaching all the time, reviewing and drilling, reaching out into new work, explaining, developing. But when all is said, always the most notable thing about that recitation, and most of the other class exercises which I witnessed, was the eager attention of the class. Whence comes this? Perhaps it

comes from the German's national trait of taking himself and all that he undertakes very seriously. Certain it is that the German teacher and student alike take the work of the school with absolute seriousness. The boys are not coddled or coaxed into learning. It is taken as a matter of course that they are there to work, and work hard. That is their business in school. The habit of orderly hard work is inculcated from the first. The discipline is practically of a military character. It never seems to occur to a German boy that disobedience and disorder are possible. He stays put. From his cradle up he has learned that on every hand there are restrictions within which he must walk. This atmosphere was instinctively felt by my own little five-year-old when he asked one day: "Ist alles in Deutschland verboten?"

Again we are moved to ask: Is this state of things an unmixed blessing? Be this as it may, it certainly produces admirable results of orderly and serious work in the class-room.

5. The work is carefully graded and clean-cut. Two years ago there was read at this conference a most excellent and practical paper, the central thought and plea of which was that the student should know from day to day in the Latin class as well as in algebra and all else just what is expected of him. The outline of the Latin curriculum which I have given at length in the first part of my paper shows that the Germans appreciate this point and act upon the principle involved. The text-books are admirably graded; the assignment of work from year to year, and from day to day, is very definite, and both teacher and pupil well know just what is expected of them.

6. Home study, as distinguished from class-room study, is recognized and assigned. This is a definite assignment generally of a written piece of work. This is recognized, not only by the teacher in the school, but also by the parents in the home. I have seen German mothers day after day keeping their boys to their work in complete preparation for the morrow's lessons immediately upon their return from school, before they were allowed to think of play. Here again, however, we feel that this is an overworking of an otherwise excellent principle.